THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Government have placed no restrictions on the direct export of tyres to Pakistan. Pakistan maintains resitrictions on direct imports of tyres from India. The matter has been taken up with Pakistan, but without any result.

Violation of Statutory Obligation by Nestle

309. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the imbroglio in the Coffee Board resulting from violation of statutory obligations by Nestle in the matter of export of Coffee;

(b) whether a delegation of coffee planters from Karnataka recently submitted a memorandum to the Minister of Cl Commerce to intervene and to ensure that an emendment to the Coffee Act is passed through an ordinance; and

(c) whether Government would consider introducing Free Sale Quota (FSQ) to enable small coffee growers to export directly?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The Coffee Board is investigating a case of alleged failure of M/s Nestle Ltd. to Export Coffee purchased in Export auction earlier this year, within the permissible period.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Government has not yet taken a decsion in the matter.

Vendors Backing out from MMTC Contract

310. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation had contracted with Quadros International of Hong Kong sometime back for the supply of 23,000 tonnes of Urea and whether the vendors had backed out from the contract;

(b) whether it is also a fact that in view of the 'no-show' by the venders MMTC has been asked to settle a dead-freight claim of Rs. 4.00 crores by shipping companies; and

(c) whether any inquiry has been instituted so as to fix responsibility on MMTC officials responsible for not checking the vendors' credentials and capacity to honour contracts and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) MMTC concluded a contract with M/s Quadros International, Hong Kong for supply of 25,000 MT of Urea, the Company failed to ship the contracted quantity.

(b) No, Sir. The Vessel was loaded by another supplier from whom risk purchase as per contractual term was made on behalf of M/s Quadros International.

(c) Since August, 1992, M/s Quadros International were awarded four contracts for supply of total quantity of about 1.75 lakh MT on the basis of their participation in tenders floated by MMTC. All the four contracts were suecessfully honoured by them and there was no doubt about their credibility.

311. [*Transferred to 9th December*, 1993]

Decision to allow Private Sector to set up Warehouses

312. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to allow the private sector to set up warehouses for stocking duty free goods for sale to companies engaged in exports; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the private sector thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The matter is under consideration of the Government.

Import of Consumer Products

313. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to import consumer products like face cream, toothpaste etc; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALAUDDIN AHMED): (a) The Government have no proposal at present to import consumer products like face cream, tooth paste etc.

(b) Does not arise

Changes Sought in Export Policy of Books

314. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA:
SHRI P. UPENDRA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that book publishers and distributors have sought changes in the export policy and grant of soft loans to give a "much needed" fillip to the export of books; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) No specific proposal has been received from book publishers and distributors seeking change in the export policy and grant of soft loans.

Under the Export—Import Policy 1992—97, exports of books and publications are allowed freely. Marketing Development Assistance (MDA) is granted to the Chemicals and Allied Products Export Promotion Council, Calcutta, annually which helps to boost the export of books and publications. No special dispensation is granted to any industry in this regard.

Export of Coal

315. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to export coal in the coming years; and

(b) if so, the details thereof; and what is the present production of coal in the country?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Export of coal is permitted without any restriction under the current EXIM policy. The level of production was around 238.23 million tonnes in 1992-93.

Implications of Nafta on India's External Trade

316. SHRIMATI ILA PANDA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what would be the implications of the formation of North Atlantic Free Trade Association (NAFTA) on India's external trade;

(b) whether it is a fact that suggestions were made by two US-based Indian Economists that India should join NAFTA;

(c) if so, details thereof and

(d) what is the status of India's declared stand on free trade within SAARC countries?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to to (d) The North American Free Trade